



NEWS RELEASE

CALIFORNIA STATE TREASURER PHIL ANGELIDES

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California State Treasurer Phil Angelides' Statement on National Hispanic Heritage Month 2006

California has a proud Hispanic heritage. We have the largest, and surely, the most dynamic Hispanic population in the U.S. Some 12 million Californians, a third of the state's population, identify themselves as Hispanic or Latino.¹

September is a month of celebration throughout Latin America, with independence days for Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua on September 15; Mexico's independence day on the 16th; and Chile's on the 18th.² In the U.S., National Hispanic Heritage Month was first celebrated in 1988. This year, it begins on September 15 and honors the cultural richness and vast contributions that those of Hispanic descent have provided America.

In California, we are greatly beholden to those with family roots in Latin America, such as pioneering labor leaders César Chávez – honored each March 31st in California on César Chávez Day – and Dolores Huerta, both of whose campaigns on behalf of some of the nation's most disadvantaged workers are legendary.

We honor California's Hispanic war heroes who have served our nation proudly and with valor. Some gave the ultimate sacrifice – dying in selfless defense of their fellow soldiers — and were awarded with high commendations including the Congressional Medal of Honor.³

We honor Hispanic-American visionaries who, as astronauts have furthered America's exploration of space, and of Hispanic-American Nobel Prize winners, who have expanded our knowledge of cell biology and particle physics.

Those of Hispanic and Latino heritage continue to have a central role in virtually every endeavor of life in America and California. It is a noble history, deserving to be told and retold. *California les debe una gran deuda de agradecimiento.* (California owes you a great debt of gratitude.)

¹ www.censusscope.org/us/print_rank_race_hispanicorlatino_alone.html

² <http://www.factmonster.com/spot/hhm1.html>

³ *Marines' homecoming bittersweet* The Honolulu Advertiser (Hawaii) April 27, 2005